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Concerning Soviet Attitudes Toward Foreign Communists,
Communist Parties, and Communist States.

1. Since the time of the revolution, the leaders of the Soviet Union have always differentiated between their relations with foreign communists whether members of individual parties or rulers of other states and other foreigners and foreign states. In practice, the Soviet leaders have demanded more from foreign communists, been more harsh in punishing misdeeds, and more grudging in rewards than they have in their dealings with representatives of non-communist and especially "bourgeois" states. Up through the 1920's, there was enough academic freedom and tolerance for open discussion to permit Soviet theorists to advocate openly ideas aimed at bringing Soviet practice in dealing with the outside world into line with the theories of Marxism-Leninism as a way of resolving this contradiction in Soviet behavior. It was at this time, for example, that legal theorists such as Pashukanis and Stuchka made their contribution to Soviet jurisprudence in both international and national law. With the growth of Soviet diplomatic and trade relations with foreign countries, these theories were denounced as anti-Soviet and continuing on to the present time, the Soviet Union has adopted an increasingly conventional attitude toward international law, as applied to non-communist states and international organizations. But while the revolutionary element has almost disappeared from Soviet writings concerning the formal rights and obligations of states and other such matters, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has consistently maintained that the duty of all communists everywhere is to support the Soviet state and--at times implicitly and at times quite explicitly--that the leaders of the Soviet Communist Party had the right to demand obedience from communist parties and communist states. Perhaps the clearest definition of the obligations of a communist was Stalin's of 1927:

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"A revolutionary is he who without arguments, unconditionally, openly and honestly . . . is ready to defend and strengthen the USSR, since the USSR is the first proletarian, revolutionary state in the world . . . an internationalist is he who, unreservedly, without hesitation, without conditions is ready to defend the USSR because the USSR is the base of the world revolutionary movement, and to defend, to advance this revolutionary movement is impossible without defending the USSR."

Andrei Vishinsky, the most vehement denouncer of Pashukanis in the 1930's, wrote in 1948:

"At present the only determining criterion of revolutionary proletarian internationalism is: are you for or against the USSR, the motherland of the world proletariat? . . . Actual cooperation with the USSR, the readiness of the workers of any country to subject all their aims to the basic problem of strengthening the USSR in its struggle--this is the manifestation of revolutionary proletarian internationalism. . . The defense of the USSR, as of the socialist motherland of the world proletariat, is the holy duty of every honest man everywhere and not only of the citizens of the USSR."

These statements find their direct echo in the words of Eric Honecker, member of the East German Politburo, who wrote on October 7 of this year in Pravda:

"Relations with the USSR, relations with the CPSU, are for us, as for all Leninists, the most important criterion by which a party pretending to the right to call itself Marxist-Leninist is judged. In our time, it is impossible to be a communist without love for the land of Lenin, without supporting its policy. . ."

2. As the number of countries calling themselves communist has increased and divisions among them become more apparent, Soviet writings have more and more tended to emphasize the

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"complete equality" of all socialist states and the strict observance among them of respect for independence and national sovereignty. At the same time, however, the duty of fealty to the Soviet Union has continued to be explicitly part of the obligation of communists as spelled out in major documents from the Soviet party and from international conferences of parties under Soviet sponsorship. The communique from the meeting of Communist party leaders in Moscow in November 1957, for example, referred to "the invincible camp of socialist countries headed by the Soviet Union." Further on the same communique said: "The Communist and Workers' parties have a particularly important responsibility with regard to the destinies of the world socialist system The parties represented at the meeting declare that they will tirelessly promote their unity and comradely cooperation with a view to further consolidating the commonwealth of Socialist states."

3. The last such meeting, that of 1960, repeated the same sentiments in its communique. "Today the restoration of capitalism has been made socially and economically impossible not only in the Soviet Union, but in the other socialist countries as well. The combined forces of the socialist camp reliably safeguard every socialist country against encroachments by imperialist reaction." The drafters of the communique saw no contradiction between that statement and the following: "Every country in the socialist camp is insured genuinely equal rights and independence." Only two paragraphs on, the same communique also says: "Every Communist party which has become the ruling party in the state, bears historical responsibility for the destinies of both its country and the entire socialist camp." This sentiment was repeated several other times in the communique in such phrases as: "Every party is responsible to the working class, to the working people of its country, to the international working class, and the Communist movement as a whole." The only difference between this statement and the preceding quotation is that in the latter every party, regardless of whether it is a ruling party or not, is bound to follow the dictates of the "movement as a whole." In case there are any doubts as to where the leadership of the movement is to be found, the communique spells that out too: "The Communist and Workers' Parties unanimously declare that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has been, and remains, the universally recognized vanguard of the world communist movement."

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4. Communiques of this sort have not been issued since 1960 because some of the Communist parties of the world have been unwilling to subscribe to such sentiments since then. Even at that time, the Soviet Union had already withdrawn its economic aid program from China. As a consequence of the divisions among Communist parties, the doctrine of the obligations of communists to follow Soviet orders has not been spelled out so explicitly since until the Soviet Union was forced to rely on armed intervention to prevent Czechoslovakia from finding its own "path to socialism." On the basis of the record, it appears that genuine Soviet respect for the national sovereignty and independence of others and Soviet willingness to observe international obligations is accorded only to its irreconcilable class enemies, the bourgeois and imperialist states. Its friends can expect much harsher treatment.